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EXAMINER
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NALVEN, ANDREW L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2134

DATE MAILED: 11/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/877,473

Applicant(s)

DAVIS, JOHN M.

Examiner

Andrew L. Nalven

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 August 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

1. Claims 1-22 are pending.

### ***Response to Arguments***

2. Applicant's arguments filed 12 July 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.
3. Applicant has argued on page that the combination of Narad and Nortel is improper because Narad teaches away from the invention of Nortel. Applicant alleges that Narad teaches away from the use of switches for packet processing while Nortel is a switch based packet processor. Applicant's argument is unfounded because Examiner has only relied upon Nortel to provide teachings for SSL transactions. As noted in the rejection appearing below, Narad teaches all of the limitations of the presented claims except the handling of SSL traffic. Examiner combined Nortel with Narad in order to cure this deficiency. Applicant's argument has failed to show that Narad teaches away from the use of SSL transactions. Thus, the combination of Narad and Nortel is proper.
4. Applicant has argued on page 8 that the combination of Narad and Nortel fail to teach examining "the header of the plurality of packets to determine if the packet is an encrypted packet" and the decrypting of encrypted packets. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Narad teaches examining "the header of the plurality of packets to determine

if the packet is an encrypted packet" (Narad, column 61 lines 30-64, action portion indicates what processing should take place, ASL provides support for encryption, column 8 line 64 – column 9 line 27, action code sends the packet to cryptographic processor). Narad further teaches the decrypting of encrypted packets (Narad, column 9 lines 1-20).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

1. Claims 1 and 8 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The cited claims are directed to systems for handling SSL traffic in which a header is inspected to determine if a packet is encrypted. However, all SSL packets are encrypted between source and destination. Thus, the examination of a packet header to determine if a packet is encrypted in the cited claims would always report an encrypted packet.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. **Claims 1, 3, 5-8, 10, 12, 13, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)** as being unpatentable over Narad (USPN 6,157,955 – published December 5, 2000) in view of Nortel ("Using the Accelar 710 Server Switch," Nortel Networks, October 11, 1999, as cited in the IDS).

**Regarding independent claim 1**, Narad discloses an apparatus comprising  
a proxy operable to receive a plurality of packets each including an encrypted portion (apparatus receives a stream of packets to be processed, and since processing can include decryption, packets can be received that have been encrypted from the sender; see column 6, line 46, through column 7, line 2),

the proxy operable to examine the header of the plurality of packets to determine if the packet is an encrypted packet (Narad, column 61 lines 30-64, action portion indicates what processing should take place, ASL provides support for encryption, column 8 line 64 – column 9 line 27, action code sends the packet to cryptographic processor),

the proxy operable to buffer the packets until a predetermined number of packets greater than one packet are received (ring array queues one or more received packets; Fig. 2, 3 and 7; col. 8, line 32, through col. 9, line 19; col. 18, line 12, through col. 19, line 12),

the proxy further operable to decrypt the encrypted portion of each received packet (column 9, lines 5-9) and forward the decrypted packets to a predetermined destination (TX ring forwards packet to original destination address; column 30, lines 42-43, and column 31, lines 15-25).

But Narad does not explain that the proxy is a proxy that handles Secured Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol transactions.

However, Nortel teaches an SSL proxy (accelerator) that processes SSL transactions for the purpose of reducing the workload on network servers (page xiii, paragraph 1; page 1-1, paragraph 1; page 2-1, paragraph 2; and page 2-5, paragraph 2).

Therefore, it would be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Narad with the teaching of Nortel to provide a cryptographic coprocessor that can encrypt and decrypt packets in accordance with the SSL protocol. One would be motivated to do so in order reduce the workload of network servers that process SSL transactions.

**Regarding dependent claim 3**, Narad and Nortel further teach an apparatus wherein the encrypted portion of the packets are decrypted when received and the SSL proxy buffers the received packets out of order (encrypted packets placed in decryption queue when received while other packets may be forwarded out-of-order; column 30, lines 42-44 and section 7.2).

**Regarding dependent claim 5**, Narad and Nortel further teach an apparatus wherein the packets are sent by a client computer and received by a server computer

(apparatus receives packet stream from client to server, processes it, and forwards to server; see column 6, lines 42-47; column 113, lines 41-55; and Figure 1), wherein the apparatus supports TCP/IP (col. 4, lines 64-67), and wherein the intended application for the apparatus includes web billing (col. 1, lines 32-41).

But the modified device of Narad and Nortel as applied to claim 1 does not explicitly explain a client computer running a web browser and a server computer running a web server.

However, Nortel teaches an apparatus that processes packets sent by a client computer and received by a web server computer for the purpose of increasing the performance of web sites (pages xiii and B-2). And it is well known in the art that a web server running on a server computer conducts transactions with a web browser running on a client computer. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the device of Narad and Nortel with the further teaching of Nortel such that the packets are sent by a client computer running a web browser and received by a server computer running a web server. One would be motivated to do so in order to increase the performance of web sites.

**Regarding dependent claim 6**, Narad and Nortel are relied upon for teaching in regard to claims 1 and 5. Narad and Nortel further teach an apparatus wherein the SSL proxy is operable to receive unencrypted data from the server, encrypt the unencrypted data, and send the encrypted data to a client computer (apparatus receives a stream of packets to be processed, and since processing can include encryption, packets received can be unencrypted; also, the designations of client and server are

interchangeable in that the proxy can receive packets from the sender and forward to the other regardless of which computer initiates the session between the two; see column 6, line 42, through column 7, line 6; column 113, lines 41-55; and Figure 1).

**Regarding dependent claim 7**, and Nortel further teach an apparatus wherein the SSL proxy performs encryption and decryption on packets using a single end-to-end TCP connection between a client computer and a server and the source and destination address of the packets are unaltered (apparatus processes packet stream between client and server on same TCP connection and performs encryption and decryption on packets; see column 6, line 42, through column 7, line 6; column 113, lines 41-55; and Figure 1).

**Regarding independent claim 8**, Narad and Nortel are relied upon for teaching in regard to claims 1 and 5, particularly that the apparatus embodies the SSL protocol, that the client computer runs a web browser, that the server computer runs a web server, and that the received packets can contain encrypted payloads.

Narad and Nortel disclose a system for handling SSL traffic comprising:

a client computer running a web browser operable to initiate an SSL session and to send packets with encrypted payloads (apparatus receives packet stream of encrypted payloads from client to be decrypted; Narad, see column 6, lines 42-47; column 113, lines 41-55; and Figure 1).

a server computer running a web server operable to support communications with the client computer (server exists apart from apparatus and



communicates with client; Narard, see column 6, lines 42-47; column 113, lines 41-55; column 7, lines 63-67; and Figure 1); and

a SSL proxy coupling the client computer and the server computer and operable to decrypt the encrypted payloads of each packet and forward the decrypted packets to the server computer (apparatus receives encrypted packet stream from client to server, decrypts it, and forwards to server; Narard, see column 6, line 42, through column 7, line 6; column 113, lines 41-55; and Figure 1),

the proxy operable to examine the header of the plurality of packets to determine if the packet is an encrypted packet (Narad, column 61 lines 30-64, action portion indicates what processing should take place, ASL provides support for encryption, column 8 line 64 – column 9 line 27, action code sends the packet to cryptographic processor).

**Dependent claim 10** is rejected on the same basis as claim 3 with reliance upon Narad and Nortel for teaching in regard to claim 8.

**Regarding dependent claim 12**, Narad and Nortel are relied upon for teaching in regard to claim 8. Narad and Nortel further teach an apparatus wherein the SSL proxy is operable encrypt packets sent from the server to the client computer (apparatus receives a stream of packets to be processed, and since processing can include decryption, packets received at proxy can be encrypted from the sender; also, the designations of client and server are interchangeable in that the proxy can receive packets from the sender and forward to the other regardless of which computer initiates

the session between the two; Narad, see column 6, line 42, through column 7, line 6; column 113, lines 41-55; and Figure 1).

**Dependent claim 13** is rejected on the same basis as claim 7 with reliance upon Narad and Nortel for teaching in regard to claim 8.

**Regarding independent claim 21**, Narad teaches an apparatus for decrypting network data traffic comprising a proxy operable to:

(i) receive packets addressed to a server computer (see rationale for rejection of claim 5), the packets including an encrypted portion, a destination address, and a source address (apparatus supports TCP/IP which contains both a destination and a source address, and the payload can be encrypted; see column 6, line 42, through column 7, line 6; column 90, line 60, through column 91, line 15; column 104, lines 32-39; and Figure 1);

the proxy operable to examine the header of the plurality of packets to determine if the packet is an encrypted packet (Narad, column 61 lines 30-64, action portion indicates what processing should take place, ASL provides support for encryption, column 8 line 64 – column 9 line 27, action code sends the packet to cryptographic processor),

(ii) decrypt the encrypted portions of the received packets (column 6, line 42, through column 7, line 6); and

(iii) send the decrypted portions to a server computer without altering the destination or source address of the received packets (packets are intercepted at the OSI data link layer so the IP addresses remain unmodified when the

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packets are forwarded; see column 6, lines 46-48; column 7, line 63, through column 8, line 4; column 30, lines 42-44; column 31, lines 15-25; and column 104, lines 33-39).

**Dependent claim 22** is rejected on the same basis as the rejection of claims 6 and 21.

2. **Claims 2 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)** as being unpatentable over Narad and Nortel and further in view of Netscape ("Introduction to SSL," Netscape, October 9, 1998).

**Regarding dependent claim 2**, and Nortel further teach an apparatus that includes a database operable to track information about the packets (column 8, lines 16-19), including what cryptographic "operations to perform" on the packets (Crypto Command Descriptor; see column 16, lines 15-19, and column 27, lines 4-7) and the "encryption context" (column 36, lines 59-65), but Narad does not explicitly explain that this information includes a type of encryption scheme used to encrypt the encrypted portion of the packets.

However, Netscape teaches that the SSL protocol is capable of utilizing a number of alternative encryption types (page 2, last paragraph, and page 3, third paragraph).

Therefore, it would be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Narad and Nortel with the teaching of Netscape to include a database operable to track a type of encryption scheme used to encrypt the encrypted portion of the packets. The particular encryption scheme

employed for each packet would be recorded, in the least, in the Crypto Command Descriptor, which describes to the cryptographic coprocessor the operations to perform on each packet. One would be motivated to do so in order to permit the cryptographic coprocessor to handle a variety of encryption schemes in accordance with SSL protocol.

**Dependent claim 9** is rejected on the same basis as claim 2 with reliance upon Narad and Nortel for teaching in regard to claim 8.

3. **Claims 4 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)** as being unpatentable over Narad and Nortel and further in view of Bakhtiari et al, hereinafter Bakhtiari, ("A Message Authentication Code based on Latin Squares," Proceedings of Australasian Conference on Information Security and Privacy, 1997).

**Regarding dependent claim 4**, Narad and Nortel do not explicitly explain a proxy that tracks a message authentication code used to authenticate a message.

However, Bakhtiari teaches that a message authentication code is a common cryptographic tool composed of a checksum and a cryptographic key that is used to authenticate a message and verify that it has not been modified (page 1, first paragraph). Moreover, Narad and Nortel teach the using and tracking of both a checksum (column 36, lines 40, through column 37, line 20) and a cryptographic key (column 27, lines 4-7).

Therefore, it would be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Narad and Nortel with the teaching of

Bakhtiari to track a message authentication code used to authenticate a message. One would be motivated to do so in order to facilitate message authentication using a common method.

**Dependent claim 11** is rejected on the same basis as claim 4 with reliance upon Narad and Nortel for teaching in regard to claim 8.

4. **Claims 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)** as being unpatentable over Narad and Nortel, further in view of Shostack ("An Overview of SSL," white paper, May 1995), and further in view of Po ("RFC 879 – TCP Maximum Segment Size and related topics," Network Working Group, 1983).

**Regarding dependent claim 14**, Narad and Nortel are relied upon in regard to the teaching in claim 8, but Narad and Nortel do not explain that the SL proxy buffers the packets until a predetermined number of packets arrive before decrypting the packets.

However, Shostack teaches that the SSL protocol is independent of TCP and that a transmitted message is fragmented into one or more encrypted records of up to 32,767 bytes each (page 1). And Po teaches that TCP segments (packets) vary in size depending on the Maximum Segment Size set by a receiving computer, with the long established practice in the art of setting the maximum segment size to 536 bytes (pages 1 and 2). One of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that multiple packets (TCP segments) would be required to transmit an encrypted SSL record where the record exceeds 536 bytes (not even considering the bytes required for the TCP header) and

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that such packets amount to a predetermined number which would need to be buffered before the message could be decrypted.

Therefore, the Examiner takes official notice that it would be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the device of Norad and Nortel buffers the packets until a predetermined number of packets arrive, then decrypts packets, and forwards the decrypted packets to the server. One would be motivated to do so in order to properly decrypt an SSL record that was fragmented into multiple packets after the record was encrypted.

**Regarding independent claim 15**, Narad and Nortel are relied upon for teaching in regard to claim 1, particularly that the method involves the processing of SSL packets. Narad and Nortel further teach a method comprising:

initializing an SSL session between a client computer and a SSL proxy (apparatus receives packet stream of encrypted payloads from client to be decrypted; see column 6, lines 42-47; column 113, lines 41-55; and Figure 1);

receiving a packet including an encrypted portion at the SSL proxy (since processing can include decryption, packets can be received that have been encrypted from the sender; see column 6, line 46, through column 7, line 2);

determining if the received packet is a SSL packet (PP determines the nature of the packet, and given the teaching of Nortel, can determine whether it is an SSL packet; see column 6, line 56, through column 7, line 6; column 8, lines 8-16; and column 59, lines 51-54);

placing the received packet in a hold queue (arriving packets are queued; see column 7, line 67, through column 8, line 8; and column 30, lines 42-48);

outputting the decrypted packets to a server computer (column 9, lines 5-9; column 30, lines 42-43, and column 31, lines 15-25).

But Narad and Nortel do not explicitly explain checking the hold queue to determine if all packets expected for a given record have arrived and decrypting the encrypted portion of each packet once all the packets expected for the given record have arrived.

However, Shostack teaches that the SSL protocol is independent of TCP and that a transmitted message is fragmented into one or more encrypted records of up to 32,767 bytes each (page 1). And Po teaches that TCP segments (packets) vary in size depending on the Maximum Segment Size set by a receiving computer, with the long established practice in the art of setting the maximum segment size to 536 bytes (pages 1 and 2). One of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that multiple packets (TCP segments) would be required to transmit an encrypted SSL record where the record exceeds 536 bytes (not even considering the bytes required for the TCP header) and that the hold queue would continue to receive such packets until all packets for that record were received, as SSL decryption operates on the entire record.

Therefore, the Examiner takes official notice that it would be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the device of Norad and Nortel checks the hold queue to determine if all packets expected for a given record have arrived and decrypts the encrypted portion of each packet once all the packets

expected for the given record have arrived. One would be motivated to do so in order to properly decrypt an SSL record that was fragmented into multiple packets after the record was encrypted.

**Dependent claim 16** is rejected on the same basis as claim 4 with reliance upon Narad and Nortel for teaching in regard to claim 15.

**Regarding dependent claim 17**, Narad and Nortel further teach that non-SSL packets are sent directly to the server (packets, especially those not requiring cryptographic processing, can be forwarded directly to the destination address; see column 30, lines 42-48, and column 31, lines 14-24).

**Regarding dependent claim 18**, Narad and Nortel further teach that the step of placing the packets in a hold queue comprises:

placing packets received out of order in a queue (out of order received packets can be queued for processing by the Policy Engine; see column 7, line 63, through column 8, line 4; column 31, lines 1-4; column 109, lines 3-6; and column 111, lines 25-35); and

decrypting packets received in order and forwarding the decrypted packets to a server computer (decryption is performed in order as PE can examine packets by sequence number before making them available to cryptographic coprocessor; see column 8, lines 9-13; column 60, line 50-53; column 61, lines 58-62; column 107, 58-60; column 108, line 24-58; and column 110, lines 58-67);

checking the hold queue to determine if the packet in the queue is next in sequence (column 108, line 63, through column 109, line 6);



releasing the packet from the hold queue if the packet in the queue is the next in sequence (column 108, line 63, through column 109, line 6; and column 110, lines 58-67); and

getting a new packet if the packet in the hold queue is not the next in sequence (PE can pass packet directly to cryptographic coprocessor by checking sequence number of arriving packets with the next expected sequence number in the queue; see column 31, lines 1-4 and 29-32; column 108, line 24, through column 109, line 6; and column 110, lines 58-67).

**Dependent claim 19** is rejected on the same basis as claim 7 with reliance upon Narad and Nortel for teaching in regard to claim 15.

**Dependent claim 20** is rejected on the same basis as claim 6 with reliance upon Narad and Nortel for teaching in regard to claim 15.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andrew L. Nalven whose telephone number is 571 272 3839. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 8-6, Alternate Fridays.

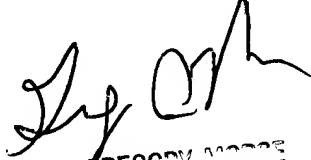
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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Morse can be reached on 571 272 3838. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Andrew Nalven

*AN*

  
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